

November 13, 2024

North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council
Attn.: Bridget Powers - District 5 Director and Maggie Steakley – NTRAC Chair
175 Fulweiler Avenue , Auburn, CA 95603
Submitted via email: bpowers@placer.ca.gov and maggiesteakley@gmail.com

Re: Item 8.A: Letter from the North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council to the Placer County Board of Supervisors

Dear North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council Chair and Members,

Thank you for your initiative to consider providing comments, and to provide a venue for public comments, on the Final Revised Environmental Impact Report (FREIR) for the Village at Palisades Tahoe Specific Plan (VPTSP, Project). The League to Save Lake Tahoe encourages you to submit a letter to the Placer County Board of Supervisors opposing the Project as it is currently proposed.

The League to Save Lake Tahoe (League) is dedicated to protecting and restoring the environmental health, sustainability, and scenic beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin. In connection with our mission, we advocate for the implementation of and compliance with policies contained within Tahoe’s regional land use and planning documents, including the Bi-State Compact (Compact), the 2012 Regional Plan Update (RPU), the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and Tahoe Basin Area Plans.

The VPTSP, while not technically located within the Tahoe Basin, is directly adjacent, and will significantly impact the Tahoe Basin’s environment and undermine efforts within the Tahoe region to implement adopted plans and policies and to protect the environment. In particular, the impacts of the Project as proposed will make it difficult if not impossible to achieve and maintain TRPA’s environmental thresholds, specifically those concerning air quality, water quality, and transportation.

The League’s position on the VPTSP has remained consistent for more than a decade, as the Project proponent (Alterra Mountain Company) has not made any substantive changes to the VPTSP’s design or environmental analysis despite years of feedback from the League, Sierra Watch, Olympic Valley Municipal Advisory Council, other regional conservation organizations, and the public. The League opposed the project when it was proposed in 2012 as the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan, and continued to oppose it as it was approved by Placer County in 2016. We continue to oppose the Project in this, its most recent iteration. Consistent with our 2012 concerns, still unaddressed, the League’s opposition is due to the significant, unanalyzed, and unmitigated impacts to Lake Tahoe’s environment – most notably from the large number of added daily vehicle trips and related vehicle miles travelled (VMT) in the Basin.

By not accepting responsibility for their impacts to Tahoe, Alterra is attempting to profit on their proximity to Tahoe without showing due concern for protecting Tahoe’s unique and fragile environment and those who enjoy it.

The League's Main Concerns Are:

- The VPTSP will undermine the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's (TRPA) federal directive to attain and maintain Threshold Standards. The Tahoe Region's VMT Threshold (environmental carrying capacity) will be more difficult if not impossible to achieve and maintain with this Tahoe-adjacent project adding unmitigated VMT to the Tahoe Basin at a rate of 1,353 new daily car trips (12,406 VMT) on an average day and 3,300 new daily car trips (23,842 VMT) on an already busy summer day.¹
- The environmental/regulatory setting and the significant environmental impacts to Tahoe – including but not limited to VMT, water quality, and wildfire – remain inadequately analyzed in the RFEIR and unmitigated in the Project plan.
- New and pertinent information has become readily available since the EIR was certified, which shows that new or substantially more severe significant impacts will occur.

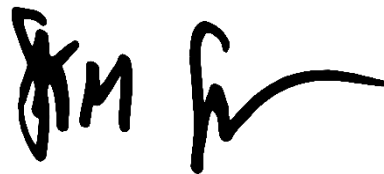
The environmental impacts from the VPTSP can only be addressed with a new recirculated EIR, likely analyzing a reduced-size project. The new EIR must accurately analyze significant impacts using the best currently available science within the current environmental and regulatory setting and mitigate impacts with specific projects and programs implemented or funded by the Project.

Our concerns, focused on the impacts to Lake Tahoe's environment and communities, are a subset of the many concerns NTRAC outlines in its draft letter to the Board of Supervisors as included in the agenda for the November 14 NTRAC meeting. In line with our mission and our decade-long stance on this proposed project, we strongly support the NTRAC in submitting the comment letter, as currently drafted, to the Board of Supervisors ahead of their November 19th meeting.

Sincerely,



Darcie Collins, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
Darcie/Jesse and Steve



Steve Spurlock
Board President